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ABSTRACT

Two studies examined seven teachers' acceptance of a strategies-based approach to reading instruction during their first year of using the intervention. Interviews and observations revealed that the intervention, a long-term transactional strategies instruction program called SAIL (Students Achieving Independent Learning), was fully acceptable to only two of the seven teachers. Issues that influenced acceptability included professional development support and teacher choice. Recommendations that could lead to greater acceptance of transactional strategies instruction by teachers using it for the first time are offered. Briefly, teachers need: several years of professional development; a safe, supportive school environment; explanations and modeling of what good strategy teachers do; and encouragement and support from program developers. (Two tables of data are included and 14 questionnaire items relevant to acceptability are appended. Contains 61 references.)
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Teachers' First Year of Transactional Strategies Instruction

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READING RESEARCH REPORT NO. 5

Fall 1993

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Teachers' First Year of Transactional Strategies Instruction

Pamela Beard El-Dinary
Georgetown University Language Research Projects

Ted Schuder
Maryland State Department of Education

READING RESEARCH REPORT NO. 5
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Ted Schuder works for the Maryland State Department of Education's Division of Instruction. While serving in the Montgomery County Public Schools' Office of Academic Skills, he developed an integrated reading/language arts curriculum for grades K-8. For the past eight years he has worked on the use of strategies-based instruction in meaning-centered curricula, while exploring the application of interactive video to staff development. Previously he worked for the New York State Department of Education, where he designed and developed theory-based reading comprehension assessments. He has more than twenty years' experience in designing instructional programs and criterion referenced assessments.

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Teachers' First Year of Transactional Strategies Instruction

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Abstract. In two studies we examined 7 teachers' acceptance of a strategies-based approach to reading instruction during their first year of using the intervention. Interviews and observations revealed that the intervention, transactional strategies instruction, was fully acceptable to only 2 of 7 teachers. We discuss issues that influenced acceptability, including professional development support and teacher choice, and we make recommendations that could lead to greater acceptance of transactional strategies instruction by teachers using it for the first time.

Transactional strategies instruction is an approach to teaching reading that has been created in real schools and that is based on cognitive theory and research (see also Pressley, El-Dinary, et al., 1992). The primary goal of transactional strategies instruction is to aid students and teachers in making meaning from text. In reading lessons based on this approach, students and teachers use cognitive strategies to make meaning as they transact with texts (by reading) and with each other (in group discussion). Transactional strategies instruction occurs on-line as the teacher and students transact with authentic texts.

The instruction is transactional in at least three senses. First, what happens during reading group is co-determined by the students and teacher (Bell, 1968; Bjorklund, 1989, pp. 228-231; Sameroff, 1975). That is, rather than the teacher pre-determining the direction in which the lesson will proceed, group members transact with one another as they read a text. Thus transactional strategies instruction takes advantage of "teachable moments" when discussion of strategic processing would be appropriate.

Second, interpretations are co-determined as students and teachers transact with text (e.g., Rosenblatt, 1978). Rosenblatt's reader

response theory asserts that meaning lies not only in the text, nor only in the reader's mind, but in the transactions between the reader's background knowledge and the information provided by the text. Consistent with this view, students in transactional strategies instruction reading groups learn how to use their background experiences and knowledge of the world — in conjunction with effective thought processes and strategies — when reading a text. For example, the students learn to relate their knowledge and experiences to the content of the text.

Third, the meaning created through student-teacher-text transactions is different from the meaning any group member would have created alone, which is consistent with organizational psychology research on group problem-solving (e.g., Hutchins, 1991; Wegner, 1987). It is expected that students will learn about reading through the interpretations and modeled mental processes of other group members. It is also expected, based on Vygotsky's (1978) view that higher psychological functions have social origins (Day, Cordon, & Kerwin, 1989), that years of transactions involving prediction, questioning, clarification, visualization, association, and summarization will produce independent, successful readers who engage in such processes on their own (see Bergman & Schuder, 1992, and Pressley, El-Dinary, et al., 1992, for details and elaboration).

The Montgomery County Language Arts Curriculum

In this paper, we report on teachers' responses to an intervention that was developed to supplement the Montgomery County (Maryland) Public Schools language arts curriculum. Ted Schuder and his colleagues developed Montgomery County's meaning-centered curriculum for reading, writing, speaking, and thinking (Schuder, 1986). The Montgomery County curriculum is thoroughly constructivist (Bransford, Barclay, & Franks, 1972; Spiro, 1980) in both principle and practice. In reading, for example, the curriculum emphasizes the vital roles of background knowledge (Anderson, Reynolds, Schallert, & Goetz, 1977; Bransford & Johnson, 1972), inference (Collins, Brown, & Larkin, 1980; Frederiksen, 1975; Hansen & Pearson, 1983; Warren, Nicholas, & Trabasso, 1979), text structure (Mandler & Johnson, 1977; Meyer, 1975), and pragmatic context (Morgan & Green, 1980) in constructing an interpretation of discourse. The reading component also emphasizes instruction in genuine children's literature rather than texts created expressly for teaching reading.

The Montgomery County SAIL Program

The intervention presented to teachers in this study was a prototype of transactional strategies instruction that Janet L. Bergman and Ted Schuder created as an instructional supplement for presenting Montgomery County's regular reading and language arts curriculum. This prototype, called Students Achieving Independent Learning or SAIL (Bergman & Schuder, 1992), is a long-term strategies instruction program designed to give at-risk students better access to the curriculum described above. Schuder and Bergman designed SAIL to be

offered as an option to teachers across the school system.

SAIL is based both in the basic principles forming the theoretical roots of the Montgomery County reading/language arts curriculum (i.e., constructivism, discourse analysis, and rhetorical and language arts learning principles) and in a synthesis of several major strands in recent cognitive research, which stress: (a) the importance of metacognition in reading and mathematics (Brown, Bransford, Ferrara, & Campione, 1983; Schoenfeld, 1987); (b) the role of social support systems in learning (Vygotsky, 1978); (c) theory-based models of the reading process (Collins, Brown, & Larkin, 1980; Kintsch & van Dijk, 1978); (d) the vital significance of motivation (Malone & Lepper, 1987) and interest (Anderson, Mason, & Shirey, 1984) in reading and learning; (e) the theoretical and practical conceptualization of strategic behavior (Brown, 1980; Duffy & Roehler, 1987a, 1987b; Paris, Lipson, & Wixson, 1983); (f) the concept of a functional repertoire of strategies, its role in reading processes, and the conditions affecting its use (Collins & Smith, 1982); (g) the context-specificity (Collins, Brown, & Newman, 1989) and intentionality (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1989) of learning; and (h) important new conceptualizations of teaching, such as explicit instruction (Pearson & Dole, 1987; Pearson & Gallagher, 1983), direct explanation (Duffy, Roehler, Sivan, et al., 1987), and responsive elaboration (Duffy & Roehler, 1987c).

Through SAIL, students learn how, why, and when to use a repertoire of empirically validated strategies (see Pressley, Johnson, et al., 1989). SAIL explicitly teaches comprehension monitoring strategies — prediction (Schuder, Clewell, & Jackson, 1989), visualization (Pressley, 1977), summarization (Brown & Day, 1983; Palincsar & Brown, 1984), and think-aloud (Bereiter & Bird, 1985) — to aid understanding of difficult text. SAIL also teaches problem-solving strategies — ignoring the problem and reading on, guessing by using context clues or picture clues, and looking back or re-reading — to assist the student in overcoming comprehension difficulties.

Although SAIL was originally developed to serve at-risk readers, it was designed to be appropriate and helpful for all readers. SAIL strategies are taught according to a model for explicit instruction in which the teacher and students share responsibility for learning (Bergman, 1992; Duffy et al., 1987; Pearson & Gallagher, 1983). At the beginning of SAIL instruction, the teacher assumes most of the responsibility by defining, explaining, and modeling strategies. As instruction proceeds, the teacher cedes regulation of strategies use to the students, coaching them as they try to apply the strategies. The entire process of explicit instruction occurs as the teacher and students read authentic texts, with the cycle from first introduction of strategies to autonomous use extending over three or more years in the primary grades.

It is important to note that SAIL is only one component of effective instruction rather than a total program. The developers of SAIL intended for teachers to integrate SAIL with other instructional approaches, such as readers'/writers' workshops, cooperative learning, and whole language activities.

Studies of the Acceptability of Transactional Strategies Instruction

Regardless of its psychological validity and genesis in school settings, successful implementation of an instructional intervention depends on whether teachers find it acceptable. Teachers at various levels of involvement with SAIL's transactional strategies instruction have evaluated it favorably (Ferro, in press; Pressley et al., 1991; Pressley, Schuder, Teachers in the Students Achieving Independent Learning Program, Bergman, & El-Dinary, 1992). For example, in Pressley, Schuder, et al. (1992), 14 teachers having 2-5 years' experience with SAIL reported that they found the program highly acceptable. For these experienced strategies teachers, acceptability referred to teachers' views about the specific effects of SAIL, as well as their commitment to continuing SAIL instruction.

Transactional strategies instruction also appeals to teachers who have not tried it yet. Acceptability at that point is critical because it can affect whether teachers even attempt to learn an intervention. For example, when Ferro (in press) presented an overview of SAIL's transactional strategies instruction to 30 elementary teachers, the teachers reported high acceptability of the approach. In this case, acceptability referred to whether teachers were convinced that SAIL might have value for their students and whether they were committed enough to try SAIL in their classrooms.

In this report, we summarize results on acceptability at another crucial point — when teachers are first learning transactional strategies instruction. If teachers begin to see positive effects of strategies instruction with their own students, they may find the approach even more acceptable than at the outset; alternatively, if the intervention requires a great deal of effort or fails to pay off, enthusiasm for it might diminish. In our study of first-year SAIL teachers, acceptability referred to how well teachers liked SAIL as they were learning about it and trying it in their classrooms. We were especially interested in teachers' specific likes and dislikes concerning SAIL. Another aspect of acceptance in our study was teachers' level of commitment to continuing SAIL instruction after the first year of trying it. We were especially interested in factors that affect teachers' decisions to implement or not implement various aspects of SAIL.

A Model of Teachers Learning to Offer Strategies Instruction

Researchers have documented and discussed several challenges in implementing strategies-based instruction (Anders & Bos, 1992; Gaskins, Cunicelli, & Satlow, 1992; Kline, Deshler, & Schumaker, 1992; Pressley, Goodchild, Fleet, Zajchowski, & Evans, 1989; Roehler, 1992). Using these sources, it is possible to derive the following model of teacher development:

1) Activating teachers' background knowledge. As Anders and Bos (1992) suggest, the content of professional development activities should be related to teachers' background knowledge. Teachers have little reason to use an intervention unless they are convinced that it will help their particular students. Effective

professional development begins with teachers articulating their perceptions of students' instructional needs and discussing their background knowledge about how these needs might be met.

2) Obtaining teacher/administrator commitment. After an overview of strategies-based instruction is presented and related to teachers' background knowledge, teachers and administrators can make an informed commitment to participate in the innovation (see Roehler, 1992, on importance of the principal's active support and participation).

3) Providing direct/explicit instruction of the intervention. To teachers who agree to participate, professional development leaders give explanations of the differences between strategies-based instruction and other instruction, the principles for teaching strategies, and the expected student outcomes. Professional development leaders also model strategies-based instruction (Anders & Bos, 1992), including modeling of how to teach specific strategies. Teachers have opportunities to practice the instruction, and they receive feedback through peer coaching (Joyce & Showers, 1982), self-reflection (Anders & Bos, 1992), and group trouble shooting (Anders & Bos, 1992; Kline et al., 1992).

4) Coordinating the intervention. The basic principles and individual strategies that have been presented are integrated into a cohesive program. The teachers can coordinate the intervention through cooperative planning, which can include discussions about scope and sequence, classroom management, encouraging transfer, evaluating the intervention, and integrating strategies-based instruction with other instruction.

5) Owning and institutionalizing the intervention. A final step in effective professional development is setting procedures and policies to prepare schools for self-sufficiency in offering strategies instruction. In preparing for self-sufficiency, teachers and administrators take active roles in teacher development and decision-making. One of the most important activities in this final step is monitoring student progress as the intervention is being implemented.

Because these components of teacher development are critical, we attended to them in analyzing the two studies described in this report. We were open to the possibility that this model might illuminate some strengths and weaknesses of the teacher development studied here.

METHOD

Setting and Participants

This report communicates the results of 2 acceptability studies conducted with participants from 2 cohorts of teachers as they learned about and attempted to use SAIL's strategies-based instruction for the first time. All participants taught at an elementary school in Montgomery County, MD that served about 600 students. The numbers of male and female students were about equal. The ethnic compo-

sition of the student population was roughly 40% European American, 24% African American, 21% Latino, 15% Asian American, and less than 1% Native American. During each year of the study, approximately 50 students were identified for the school's English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program. About 33% of the students were eligible for free or reduced cost lunches, which made the school eligible for Chapter 1 services. Although most of the students were from middle-class backgrounds, about one-third of the school's students were from low socioeconomic backgrounds, and less than 1% were from upper middle-class backgrounds. During each year of the study, federally funded Chapter 1 services supported about 180 at-risk students in grades K-4 at the school; those students were identified through the California Test of Basic Skills and teacher referral. The school served as an experimental site for the SAIL program, which targeted at-risk students.

During 1990-91, the principal mandated that all teachers new to the school participate in SAIL. The three participants in our 1990-91 study represent a subset of the participants in SAIL during that school year. These 1990-91 participants taught grades 3, 4, and 6. During 1991-92, the principal mandated that all first-grade and second-grade teachers participate in SAIL. All four of the school's first-grade teachers participated in our study during that year. Table 1 describes the participating teachers, including grade level taught, years of teaching, and previous approach to reading instruction. Although the principal mandated participation in SAIL, the teachers participated in our studies voluntarily.

SAIL Training

The words *training* and *trainers* are used in this report because they are the terms used in Montgomery County. We acknowledge, however, the objections to this terminology recorded in the literature (e.g., Anders & Bos, 1992; K. R. Harris, personal communication, July 20, 1992; Kline et al., 1992).

Training materials. The training materials provided to the teachers in both cohorts consisted mostly of information about strategies-based instruction (e.g., a visual model for explicit instruction; an outline of characteristics of independent learners; a list of instructional "dos and don'ts," such as "Do encourage children to read/listen to a favorite piece many times.... Don't always require students to read very difficult material aloud by themselves."). SAIL purposefully provided no predeveloped classroom materials or scripts so that teachers would create materials to meet their own needs (see Schuder, in press); however, the participating teachers reviewed examples of supporting materials devised by experienced SAIL teachers, such as bulletin boards, cards prompting strategy choice, and individual student "fix-it kits" which included strategy names and prompts on construction paper "tools."

The 1990-1991 SAIL training. The training for the cohorts studied here was much better than the 1-day or less information session that Kline et al. (1992) described as a traditional model of in-service programs. The 1990-1991 cohort of teachers was introduced to SAIL through 4 half-day (morning) in-service training meetings for which they received

Table 1. Descriptions of Participating Teachers

Teacher	Cohort	Years at This School	Years Teaching	Education	Grade Level	Previous Approach to Reading Instruction[a]	Classroom Management[b]
A	1990-91	1st year	1st year	BA	4	Whole language	9
B	1990-91	1st year	1st year	BA	3	Readers'/writers' workshop; cooperative learning	3.7
C	1990-91	1st year	4th year	BA+	6	County curriculum guide, supplemented with guided reading activities	7.8
D	1991-92	3rd year	3rd year	BA	1	[No information provided.]	5.3
E	1991-92	2nd year	9th year	MA	1	Basals, county core literature and phonics objectives, journal writing	6.3
F	1991-92	1st year	4th year	BA	1	Basals	3.3
G	1991-92	2nd year[c]	2nd year[d]	BA+	1	Whole-language approach; tongue twisters, inventive spelling to teach sounds	10

[a] Or approach in which teacher was educated if teacher had not taught formally before

[b] Average rating of 3 observers on scale of 1-10, with 10 being highly effective classroom management. Information on classroom management is included because we believe it is a prerequisite to effective strategies-based instruction.

[c] 1991-1992 was G's first year teaching 1st grade. In 1990-1991, G taught kindergarten at the same school.

[d] After a long break from teaching

substitute teacher coverage. Janet Bergman, one of the SAIL developers, led the in-service meetings and observed each teacher during one lesson, providing feedback. At the first in-service training session in mid-September 1991, Bergman provided a research-based rationale for SAIL, outlined SAIL's goals, explained the model for explicit instruction, and described the SAIL strategies. The participants then engaged in activities designed to illustrate key concepts. Bergman modeled a SAIL lesson, with the teachers taking the role of students. At the end of the first training session, the teachers were asked to practice SAIL with a group of their students.

At the second in-service training session in late September, the participants discussed their initial attempts at SAIL. They took a humorous "quiz," reviewing concepts presented in the first training session. They also completed an activity that involved dos and don'ts of SAIL instruction (see examples under ***Training materials***). Bergman then described individual strategies in greater detail, giving the teachers ideas for prompts they could use to explain the strategies to students. Two experienced SAIL teachers modeled SAIL lessons and talked about how they prepared lessons. Videotapes of SAIL lessons also were presented and discussed.

During the last two training sessions in December 1991 and February 1992, the participants discussed their experiences in trying to teach SAIL and discussed more videotaped SAIL lessons. Bergman and Schuder, the SAIL developers, described some SAIL concepts in greater depth.

The 1991-1992 SAIL training. The 1991-1992 cohort had 3 half-days of in-service training sessions, led by Bergman and Schuder. At the first session in late October 1991, Bergman and Schuder provided a research-based rationale for SAIL, outlined SAIL's goals, explained the model for explicit instruction, and described the SAIL strategies. A video in which veteran SAIL teachers modeled SAIL lessons was shown. At the end of this session, the participating teachers were asked to try SAIL with their students.

At the second in-service training session in January 1992, Bergman and Schuder reviewed key components of SAIL, including its goals, strategies, and model for explicit instruction. A review was necessary because of the three-month time lapse between the first and second sessions. The teachers watched videotapes of SAIL lessons and discussed their reactions to them. At the end of this session, they were asked to try some additional SAIL activities with their students. Between the second and third training sessions, Michael Pressley, a senior researcher who had conducted studies with experienced SAIL teachers, held four lunchtime discussions with teachers who were interested in learning more about the intervention. The discussions were open to all of the first-grade and second-grade teachers in the school, all of whom were attending SAIL training. El-Dinary and the four first-grade teachers who participated in our study attended these discussions.

At the third in-service training session in February 1992, teachers discussed their reactions to what they had tried in their classrooms.

Bergman described the strategies in greater detail. The teachers completed an activity involving dos and don'ts of teaching SAIL and discussed more videotaped SAIL lessons. Bergman presented sample instructional materials that veteran SAIL teachers had created, including bulletin boards, strategy prompt cards to be shared by a reading group, and prompts that each student could keep (e.g., the tool kit described above). The participants were encouraged to create similar materials and to use them in their classrooms.

Data Collection and Analysis

Pam El-Dinary observed and interviewed all participants during their first year of participation in SAIL. The study of the 1990-1991 cohort included 24-27 observations per teacher and five to nine interviews per teacher; the study of the 1991-1992 cohort included 9-11 observations per teacher and at least one interview per teacher. Observations and interviews, which were recorded through written fieldnotes and audiotapes, focused on the teachers' opinions of SAIL and on the changes they made in instruction.

Research questions and data collection began broadly, informing one another as each investigation formed a focus. Data collection and analyses were conducted recursively, consistent with constant comparison approaches (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Each study concluded at the end of the school year with participants completing a structured questionnaire based on issues that had emerged from the teachers' comments or practices. Questionnaire data served as a member check (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) to verify that researcher interpretations based on observations were consistent with participants' views. (They were). The teachers' instruction, self-reports, and questionnaire responses all were considered in the grounded analyses summarized here. (The Appendix contains questionnaire items pertaining to acceptability.) Pam El-Dinary developed analyses of the data set, and Michael Pressley, a senior researcher who had conducted studies with experienced SAIL teachers, developed his own analyses of the data set. The two researchers then met to develop a negotiated analysis and description of results.

RESULTS

In presenting the results, we describe the participating teachers' acceptance of SAIL and then illustrate some of the challenges they faced in learning to teach SAIL. We also discuss some critical factors that seemed to influence teacher acceptability in these studies.

Acceptability of SAIL's Transactional Strategies Instruction

All three 1990-1991 teachers attempted SAIL instruction. Teacher A (grade 4) made consistent progress incorporating SAIL into her daily reading instruction and said she "bought into" SAIL, remarking that SAIL was a natural way of teaching for her. Teacher B (grade 3), in contrast, said she did not "buy into" (again, the teacher's term) the SAIL approach. She tried many ways to fit SAIL into her reading instruction, making some progress at the end of the

year. Her main concerns were that SAIL was inconsistent with her teaching style and with other approaches she favored. Teacher C (grade 6) made progress using SAIL in one aspect of her instruction, the teaching of novels, but did not accept SAIL completely either. Her main concern was that SAIL was not applicable across the sixth-grade language arts curriculum.

In the 1991-1992 cohort (all grade 1 teachers), Teacher G accepted SAIL and made progress incorporating it into her daily reading instruction; she enjoyed teaching SAIL as she understood it and was eager to learn more. Based on observations and brief informal interviews, Teacher D also seemed to accept SAIL and to make some progress incorporating SAIL concepts into her reading instruction; the results for this teacher are sketchy, however, because she did not complete the final questionnaire or participate in more formal interviews. Teacher E, who generally accepted SAIL but seemed more tentative than Teacher G, tried to incorporate SAIL into instruction but often seemed uncertain about how to do so. She reported that SAIL was the aspect of her reading instruction with which she felt least confident. During the school year, Teacher F expressed little interest in SAIL compared to the other teachers, reporting in the final questionnaire that she had not used SAIL enough to comment on its effectiveness; instead, she had emphasized the phonics/decoding program that she had been using and found effective. She said that in the following school year she would "use the SAIL strategies that don't go against my teaching philosophy (e.g., I do not like skipping words)."

Two of the seven teachers explicitly stated that they would probably never become competent at SAIL because they did not accept the SAIL approach:

B: I could probably pick up enough of the effects and look like I was teaching SAIL.... I don't think I have the commitment to the program that it would take to be [considerably or completely competent].... I frankly don't see it happening at this point.... I don't think ever.

C: It probably will take forever [to be competent] because I probably won't buy, I'm not buying into it properly.... I'm not gonna force myself to.

In contrast, two of the seven teachers explicitly and enthusiastically stated that they did accept SAIL and found it compatible with their teaching philosophy and style:

A: Once I had an understanding of [the strategies], it was easy to model.... It was not teacher oriented; it's student oriented. The students take off with it; you're just coming in every now and then.... I do buy into it, in the sense that I think [the strategies] are effective.

G: I think a story means different things to different people depending on their experiences (the beauty of a story) — SAIL allows for this. Children get excited because they are *involved* in the process of the story — process-oriented. [SAIL] builds self-confidence in children...gets dialogues

> going between children and teacher...[gives] the children strategies to help them read in reading group or independently (Emphasis is Teacher G's).

The other three teachers were less emphatic in stating their views of SAIL, although they occasionally expressed opinions. Of these three teachers, two (Teacher D and Teacher E) seemed to buy into SAIL, whereas the third (Teacher F) was more ambivalent. Regardless of the extent to which they bought into SAIL, the teachers identified at least some aspects of the approach that they liked and disliked. Table 2 summarizes the teachers' key likes and dislikes about SAIL, with examples of their remarks.

Challenges in Implementing SAIL's Transactional Strategies Instruction

In previous studies (Pressley et al., 1991; Pressley, Schuder, et al., 1992), veteran strategies teachers reported that the first year of strategies instruction was not easy for them. Our interactions with the first-year SAIL teachers in this report were consistent with those retrospective reports. After a year of SAIL training, none of the teachers in the two cohorts we studied looked as proficient at SAIL as experienced SAIL teachers (see Brown & Coy-Ogan, in press). All of the teachers in this report made some progress in implementing SAIL (see El-Dinary, in press, and El-Dinary, Pressley, & Schuder, 1992, for more detailed analyses of these teachers' instructional changes across the year in which they learned about SAIL). However, they also struggled to fit SAIL into their teaching. None felt secure in her understanding or teaching of SAIL. To varying extents, all of the teachers had questions about what they should be doing. For example:

A: I understand it enough to where I feel comfortable about teaching it, but I don't know if I'm teaching it correctly.

B: I frequently have felt like maybe the problems I'm having are just that I don't understand.... I'll frequently say "Well my understanding is ____. Is there something that I don't understand there?..." I've never had a response where somebody said "Aha! Now I see the part you don't understand."

Two of the seven teachers expressed discomfort with the lack of prepackaged instructional materials, wanting more explicit direction:

D: They don't tell you how to go about teaching [SAIL] and there [are] no tools to say "Well, here's some little mini-lessons you could do on this." So you just kind of have to make them yourself. But I just want to teach it more sequentially or in a more organized way.

F: [I need examples of] practical application[s] for first grade, particularly nonreaders or low readers.

Ironically, the teachers did not think SAIL teaching was difficult; in fact, three teachers

Table 2. Teacher Likes and Dislikes About SAIL

Conclusion	Teacher	Illustrative Comment
Likes:		
The SAIL approach fosters positive student interaction.	B	It tends to have positive interaction between the teacher...and the students. I think the intent for the interaction is really good...an exchange of ideas focused on the content.
SAIL helps students come to a personal understanding of text through use of strategies.	B	[SAIL] goals are definitely compatible [with my goals]. I definitely want students to be independent...to focus on understanding...to be really creative and approach things as though they're more than just words on the pages — that it affects your world, it affects your feelings.
SAIL emphasizes comprehension of whole texts.	D	I think [SAIL] goes along with the primary grades because I really believe that the reason they need to learn to read is to make sense of it. If you're just gonna do all of that stuff in isolation...it's not gonna make sense.... So I really like the idea that it focuses on comprehension.
SAIL guides students' thinking as they read.	A	They [the strategies] bring out a lot of things for the students to think about.
SAIL is student-oriented.	E	[SAIL] put[s] more responsibility on the student.... Students "own" their work.
Dislikes:		
SAIL emphasizes some goals at the expense of others.	D	[Introduction to some vocabulary is important] at this level because they just don't have a lot of background. They don't *have* a lot of sight vocabulary.
Some aspects of SAIL are inconsistent with my instruction.	D	I always was told to let them really practice and be good readers before they read aloud because they didn't want them to be embarrassed.

Table 2. Teacher Likes and Dislikes About SAIL

Conclusion	Teacher	Illustrative Comment
SAIL is just a new name for things I already do.	F	[Teacher D, Teacher G, and I] came up with the idea that SAIL is just a new name for a lot of things we already do... such as predicting. We don't necessarily say "Why do you think that?" But we do predict... "What do you think's gonna happen next?" I mean, that's just something common.
SAIL alone is not helpful for students who cannot already decode.	G	When decoding wasn't used children had [a] difficult time understanding — they would try all the techniques and still not understand; this was too frustrating.
It takes too long to get through a book using the SAIL approach.	F	I'd love to do more predicting, more think-aloud and that kind of thing with my class in the morning when I read them a story...but I don't have time.
Students don't use the full set of strategies on their own.	A	It's confusing to pick up, and you have to keep working on it. And a lot of them [students] fell back on, they don't use all of them [the strategies].

explicitly remarked that it was an easy or natural way to teach. For example:

A: Well, for me it was a strength because it was easy to teach and to model; once I had a good understanding of [the strategies], it was easy to model.

E: Thinking aloud is natural.

A major challenge seemed to be that the teachers did not know how to coordinate SAIL with other reading instruction or with their own personal teaching style. For example, Teacher C thought SAIL was incompatible with the sixth-grade curriculum because it was intended for stories read at one sitting rather than novels. Teacher B believed SAIL was intended to be taught only in the way it had been presented — in teacher-guided reading groups; she believed that if she used a more student-directed cooperative learning approach that she favored, she was no longer "teaching SAIL."

DISCUSSION

Previous studies of transactional strategies instruction reported high rates of teacher acceptance (Ferro, in press; Pressley, Schuder, et al., 1992). In contrast, we report an acceptance rate of only two in seven (i.e., only two teachers fully "bought into" [accepted] SAIL). These findings are not necessarily contradictory, however, considering the differences in teacher populations studied. Specifically, Pressley, Schuder, et al. (1992) studied com-

mitted, experienced SAIL teachers who had participated in training and elected to keep using SAIL — teachers who now "owned" the approach. Ferro (in press) examined the "curbside appeal" (i.e., a product's attractiveness at first exposure) of transactional strategies instruction to teachers who had not tried it yet. Following this metaphor, the teachers who participated in the studies reported here might be thought of as buying "on approval." They were deciding whether they wanted to become full-fledged SAIL teachers. These teachers' use of the terms "buying in" and "not buying in" were telling — they were no longer "curbside" viewers but were not yet "owners" of SAIL.

Factors Influencing Acceptability

There may be several possible explanations for why a teacher accepts or rejects an intervention. In this study, we worked closely with teachers to identify factors that seemed to affect their acceptance of the SAIL approach. In interpreting the results presented here, it is important to note that all of the teachers in these studies worked in the same school. As one reviewer of this report pointed out, an extension of this study in more than one school would be useful in clarifying the extent to which the results are school-specific or program-specific. That is, it is difficult to specify aspects of the school environment that affect acceptability when only one such setting is studied. To expand our work, we recently conducted research with teachers in another school that was supporting a SAIL-like model of instruction across the curriculum (see El-Dinary, in press). Nonetheless, additional studies in which several schools are implementing strategies-based instruction would help clarify the role of the school setting.

Teaching experience and teachers' previous approaches to reading instruction appear to be factors that could affect teachers' reactions to a reading intervention. In the studies reported here, however, the teachers who generally accepted SAIL (A, D, E, and G) represented a range of teaching experience and previous approaches to reading instruction, as did the teachers who were more equivocal (B, C, and F; see Table 1). Thus, although teaching experience and approach to reading instruction may contribute to acceptance of SAIL, there were no clear patterns indicating their influence in these studies.

In contrast, the teachers themselves identified other factors that influenced their opinions and decisions about SAIL. Among the most salient factors were teacher training experiences, discussions with other teachers, individual teaching styles, and specific beliefs about learning to read.

The grade level taught also seemed to influence the perceptions of teachers of the oldest and youngest student groups. For example, the sixth-grade teacher thought SAIL was less appropriate for sixth grade because the curriculum emphasized novels, which took a long time to read and did not offer a sense of closure in an individual lesson. She pointed out that the grade six curriculum emphasized activities other than reading, such as performing plays and creating commercials; therefore, students were not always spending time reading during language arts lessons. At the other end of the

spectrum, the first-grade teachers put extensive emphasis on reading. Their strongest reservation about SAIL for beginning readers was the lack of emphasis on phonetic decoding and formal vocabulary-building activities. Even the first-grade teacher who clearly accepted SAIL emphasized that SAIL had to be supplemented with decoding instruction. In contrast to the first-grade and sixth-grade teachers, the teachers of grades three and four did not discuss how their grade level affected their acceptance of SAIL.

Because researchers and program developers are more likely to influence teacher development activities than they are other factors that contribute to teachers' acceptance of an approach, we focus our discussion on aspects of teacher training that teachers in this study indicated were influential in their opinions and decisions about SAIL.

SAIL training and teacher commitment. Discussions with the participating teachers indicated that shortcomings of teacher development played a large part in the less than complete acceptance of transactional strategies instruction documented here. For example, some of the teachers we studied said they were resistant from the outset because SAIL was required of them:

B: Choice is a real big factor, feeling like you have input into, just like children want to have input into the process of their learning, I need to have input into the process of my teaching.... Most people have their own ideas about what should be done, and I think there ought to be recognition about that.

More positively, all of the teachers expressed some degree of commitment to supporting independent student learning and to doing so through strategies instruction. However, only the two most successful first-year SAIL teachers were also committed to SAIL's explicit explanations, modeling, and scaffolded coaching as the way to teach strategies.

Although instruction in SAIL was explained and modeled for teachers during in-service meetings, the teachers felt they needed even more explanation and modeling. They also expressed the need for far more practice with feedback and more trouble-shooting with experienced SAIL teachers, coaching that was not available to them:

C: The most helpful things were the videotapes.... Some of them were hard to apply to what I was teaching, but I guess mostly what was beneficial to me was not the lectures or the written stuff, but just seeing it in action.

A: Not that you want them [program developers] in there [your classroom] every week, but it does help you to know if you're in focus and if you're correctly teaching it and also to get the proper feedback about some strategies and techniques.... What could I try to do to make it a little bit better?

G: I would like more workshops, more feedback on what I'm doing. Have some discussions on my concerns and hear how other teachers are handling similar problems.

C: Having a more open environment, more of a chance for us to share not just the positives... Try to help us with solutions...

Although SAIL is intended to be integrated with other components of effective reading instruction, the teachers in these studies were given little information about how to coordinate SAIL with other instructional approaches. In fact, some of these teachers believed that SAIL was intended to be an exclusive approach to reading instruction. For example, Teacher B thought SAIL excluded a cooperative learning approach she favored — an approach she hoped to "sneak in" while SAIL advocates were not looking:

B: For a little while I did this [cooperative reading] thing with the [audio]tapes, which I stopped doing.... Next school year, I'm gonna do that for a longer period of time. I'm thinking in ten years or something I will be doing it for maybe half the year, and people won't notice it.

SAIL training compared with the model of teacher development. In contrast to the ideal teacher development summarized in the introduction, SAIL training was less complete and less flexible, as the following points demonstrate:

(1) Teachers' prior knowledge was not activated as a foundation for the information being presented. Rather, the presentation style was more didactic.

(2) Because the school served as a SAIL pilot site, the principal mandated participation in SAIL training for the teachers we studied. Although the teachers were provided theoretical, empirical, and testimonial rationales for SAIL, they were not asked whether they wanted to make a commitment to trying the intervention. Rather, an overview of SAIL was presented with the implied expectation that they would comply.

(3) Although instruction in SAIL was explained and modeled, the participating teachers had few opportunities for coaching or feedback. Structured opportunities for peer coaching and trouble-shooting with one another and with more experienced SAIL teachers were not available to them. As one reviewer of this paper suggested, the late starting date and the time between explanatory sessions (October introduction and January follow-up) probably made implementation even more difficult for the first-grade teachers. Although this certainly represents one way in which teachers' professional development needs were not met, other aspects of the training experience (e.g., the overall lack of time spent in in-service meetings) seemed more important to teachers than the late start.

(4) Teachers had no opportunities for cooperative planning in how to coordinate SAIL with other aspects of reading instruction. Moreover, little information was provided about how teachers might do so.

We state these shortcomings of teacher development explicitly because we believe they played a large part in the less than complete acceptance of transactional strategies instruction that is documented here. Our view is that the professional support provided for these cohorts was not sufficient for teachers to feel

comfortable enough with SAIL that they could flexibly adapt and "own" it.

Evidence from interviews with more experienced SAIL teachers as they reflected on their own professional development (Pressley, Schuder, et al., 1992) supports our view that it takes a great deal more training and professional support than were available to these two cohorts of teachers to become proficient with strategies teaching (see also Brown & Coy-Ogan, in press). For example, veteran SAIL teachers claim it takes at least two years of in-service training and support to feel comfortable with strategies teaching (Pressley, Schuder, et al., 1992). Professional development of strategies teachers in other settings always takes more than 1 year and is more extensive than the training offered to these two cohorts (Deshler & Schumaker, 1988; Pressley et al., 1991). Consistent with this appraisal, three of the seven teachers studied here reported that they needed at least one more year of training to become competent teaching SAIL. (Two teachers said they would never become competent at SAIL because they did not accept it; the remaining two teachers did not say how long it would take them to become competent with SAIL.) Our view is that teachers need extensive support the first year, with gradual reduction thereafter.

Comparisons with more effective SAIL training. Although the teachers who participated in SAIL training in these studies received more professional support than is usually the case with in-service training for many innovations, it was far from sufficient to encourage complete understanding and acceptance of transactional strategies instruction. The need for extensive teacher development is emphasized when the conditions that led to past successes with SAIL (i.e., the veteran cohort described in Pressley, Schuder, et al., 1992) are compared with conditions that led to the results summarized here. The more successful cohort of veteran teachers had (a) voluntary participation; (b) more in-service training meetings (2.5 to 3.5 days versus 2.0 days and 1.5 days for the cohorts studied here) with less time between meetings (compare the 1991-92 cohort, for whom 3 months passed between the first and second in-service meetings); (c) support by teacher specialists and trained peer coaches (Joyce & Showers, 1982), who regularly modeled and coached SAIL trainees in the trainees' classrooms and helped solve problems as they occurred; (d) in-class coaching from the developers of SAIL; and (e) videotapes of their attempts to teach SAIL, which were used for self-analysis, modeling, and coaching.

Implications

So, how can we best prepare teachers for the many challenges of strategies-based instruction (e.g., Pressley, Goodchild, et al., 1989) — especially sophisticated refinements like transactional strategies instruction (Pressley, El-Dinary, Gaskins, et al., 1992) — so that the intervention will be acceptable to teachers? Our interactions with teachers struggling through their first year suggest several professional development factors that may be critical to teachers' acceptance of transactional strategies instruction. The factors identified here are consistent with those identified in previous research and theory on effective teacher devel-

opment (e.g., Anders & Bos, 1992; Gaskins et al., 1992; Joyce & Showers, 1982; Kline et al., 1992; Pressley, Goodchild, et al., 1989; Roehler, 1992), reinforcing that these are critical factors and that they apply to teachers' learning of transactional strategies instruction. To summarize, teachers need:

- Several years of professional development, starting intensively and gradually being reduced
- A safe, supportive school environment where they can experiment with the innovation
- Professional respect and honor for their rights to choose; to adjust innovations to fit their own styles, voices, strengths, and weaknesses; and to be informed about ("sold on") the efficacy of transactional strategies instruction for their students
- Explanations and modeling of what good strategies teachers do
- Coaching and in-class problem solving with feedback from master strategies teachers
- Encouragement and support from program developers in adapting the intervention to meet both the teacher's and the students' needs.

In short, teacher development should be like the strategies-based instruction it encourages. Just as students need interactive modeling, coaching, and problem-solving opportunities to become strategic readers, so teachers need these components to accept and carry out effective, flexible teaching of transactional strategies instruction. As one reviewer pointed out, these implications are not limited to the area of reading instruction. Transactional strategies instruction, regardless of the discipline in which it is applied, definitely is not a "quick fix" for students (Pressley, El-Dinary, et al., 1992); moreover, it cannot be implemented and accepted quickly by teachers. Time and professional development resources are needed to promote the growth of competent, committed transactional strategies instruction teachers.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire Items Relevant to Acceptability

* = Item appeared only in 1990-1991 questionnaire
** = Item appeared only in 1991-1992 questionnaire

What are SAIL's strengths?
What are SAIL's weaknesses?
What is easy about teaching SAIL?
What is difficult about teaching SAIL?
Tell me about ways SAIL is compatible with your teaching philosophy and style.
Tell me about ways SAIL is in conflict with your teaching philosophy and style.
*Describe how you feel during a SAIL lesson.
*What about SAIL is comfortable to you?
*What about SAIL is uncomfortable to you?
What was helpful about the SAIL professional development program?
What was not helpful about the SAIL professional development program?
What suggestions would you make for improving SAIL professional development?
How long did (will) it take until you became (become) competent teaching SAIL?

**What kind of training/support did(will) you need to become competent teaching SAIL?
What do you foresee your reading instruction looking like next year?
How much will it be influenced by SAIL? Why?

What proportion of SAIL ideas were new to you?

Almost All	More than Half	About Half	Less than Half	Almost None

How competent are you at teaching SAIL?

Completely	Considerably	Moderately	Slightly	Not at All

*How much choice do you have about whether to participate in SAIL?

Entirely Up to Me	Considerable Choice	Some Choice	Little Choice	No Choice at All

*How much autonomy do you have in tailoring SAIL to fit your needs?

Complete Autonomy	Considerable Autonomy	Some Autonomy	Little Autonomy	No Autonomy

*To what extent do you consider yourself "a SAIL teacher"? Why?

Completely	Considerably	Moderately	Slightly	Not at All

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